

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1, 10, 13, 15, 17 and 19-20 have been amended. Claims 14 and 20 have been deleted and claim 21-24 have been added. No new matter has been added.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Ginsberg reference. The Applicant respectfully disagrees and traverses the rejection.

The Ginsberg reference discloses a system for automatically indexing documents and retrieving the indexed documents. The system disclosed in the Ginsberg reference receives documents and indexes the documents such that each document is assigned one or more thesaurus entries. The thesaurus entries are associated with the document via a pointer to the document. Additionally, the system traces the document's implicit conceptual concepts based on the documents explicit conceptual concepts. The input documents comprise the database from which a user's inquiry is searched.

To retrieve the indexed documents, the system interprets query terms input by the user in accordance with system thesaurus entries and identifies documents *previously indexed and associated* with the thesaurus entries. The listings of document titles are presented to the user in conjunction with a listing of sub-topics determined by thesaurus entries associated with the list of documents. If the user chooses a sub-topic, the system reviews the set of previously identified documents, and presents a subset of documents that correspond to the original thesaurus entries and the selected sub-topic entry. The narrower set of titles is presented to the user, wherein the narrower set is merely a subset of the originally presented set of documents. If appropriate the system reiterates this process again. If desired, the user can change the sub-topic selection, wherein a second review of the originally presented list of documents would be performed.

In the instant case, the system accepts an input query from a user and analyzes the query to identify a meaning associated with the query terms. Further, the system processes the query terms and the meaning to generate an expanded search request, wherein the system expands the search automatically by including, for example, related terms. These additional terms are not user defined. Finally, a query processor creates one search string or a plurality of search strings which are formatted in accordance with a predefined search engine, or a plurality of search

engines, respectively, the search engine(s) being external to the system. Once the search strings are generated, the system transmits the search strings to the respective search engines. The search engines search documents or files that are external to the system, wherein at least a portion of the documents are unknown to the system. Upon receipt of the search results, the system collates the search results and presents them to the user.

With respect to claim 1, the Office Action states, *inter alia*, that Ginsberg discloses “generating an expanded search request” and references the ‘conjunctive expressions’ section of the document. Claim 1 has been amended such that “the expanded search request includes related terms not defined or chosen by the user”. The Ginsberg system does not expand the search utilizing terms which are *not* selected or defined by the user. Indeed, only user selected terms are included in the search. Further, the Ginsberg reference teaches away from the utilization of “parsing or related natural language processing techniques”. Ginsberg at 50 (natural language processing). Indeed, Ginsberg states that because its scope is “essentially unrestricted, the effort involved in gathering and maintaining the necessary domain knowledge to make natural language techniques worthwhile would be prohibitive.” The instant system *is* unrestricted in its ability to search information. As Ginsberg teaches away from claim 1, the Applicant asserts that it cannot render claim 1 obvious.

With reference to independent claim 15, the Office Action states that Ginsberg does not disclose providing and processing the expanded search request to a search engine, but does disclose retrieving information based on the expanded search request, which may be a Boolean search request. Based upon these assertions, the Office Action states that it would be obvious to provide the expanded search request to a search engine. The Applicant respectfully asserts that Ginsberg does not render claim 15 obvious, as Ginsberg, by design, is incapable of performing the elements of claim 15, and further does not teach or suggest the elements of claim 15.

It is well-settled law that to support a finding of obviousness, a reference *must* provide *some* motivation or reason for one skilled in the art (working without the benefit of the Applicant’s specification) to make the necessary changes in the disclosed device. The mere fact that one skilled in the art *could* modify the reference to meet the terms of the claim is not, by itself, sufficient. The mere fact that a reference may be modified in the direction of the claimed

invention does not make the modification obvious unless the reference *expressly or impliedly teaches or suggests* the desirability of the modification. *In re Gordon*, 221 USPQ 1125, 1127 (Fed. Cir. 1984); *Ex parte Clapp*, 227 USPQ 972, 973 (Bd. App. 1985); *Ex parte Chicago Rawhide Mfg. Co.*, 223 USPQ 351, 353 (Bd. App. 1984).

The cited reference fails to meet the basic requirement for a finding of obviousness established by the courts in *Gordon*, *Clapp* and *Chicago Rawhide*. For example, in claim 15 the query mechanism processes the expanded search request “to generate a *set* of boolean search requests, each associated with at least one preselected search engine, wherein each of the boolean search requests corresponds to the expanded search request; and for providing each said boolean search request to a respective preselected search engine.” A system including this combination of elements is neither disclosed or suggested in Ginsberg, and there is no suggestion in Ginsberg to modify the system disclosed therein in the direction of the present invention. Ginsberg is only capable of generating *one* search request and retrieving one set of information based on that search request at a time. Indeed, Ginsberg has only one database from which to retrieve information. Although Ginsberg could generate different boolean search request, each boolean search request would correspond to a *different* search request. Thus, Ginsberg cannot “generate a *set* of boolean search requests” for submission to a selection of predefined search engines, “wherein each of the boolean search requests corresponds to the expanded search request.” In stark contrast, the instant system is configured to generate a *set* of boolean search requests for submission to separate search engines *for each boolean search request*, wherein each boolean search request corresponds to the *same* expanded search request. Ginsberg cannot perform this task, nor does it teach or suggest, a system capable of this task. As Ginsberg fails to teach or suggest the elements of claim 15, it cannot render the claim obvious.

The Applicant asserts that amended independent claims 1 and 15 are now in allowable form. As such, the Applicant asserts that all claims depending from these claims are also allowable.

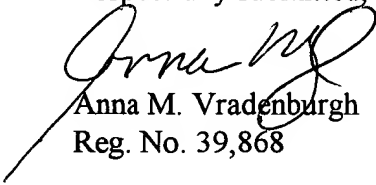
Although the Applicant contends that the dependent claims would be allowable in their originally submitted format, the Applicant, for clarification purposes, has amended claims 10, 13, 17 and 19. Claims 10, 13 and 17 include references to a “user linguistic database, wherein the

user linguistic database is representative of keyphrases and associated user-defined meanings." Although the Ginsberg reference states that the "task of alerting users to relevant documents based on user interest profiles" can be encompassed in the Ginsberg strategy, this fails to teach or suggest incorporating *user definitions* for particular words; rather, Ginsberg is merely suggesting identifying documents from a closed database related to a user's interests, *not* based on a user's definition of a term. Finally, claim 19 clarifies the flag signals, which are not merely *controlling* the search request by the selection of words from a pull-down menu by the user. Rather, the flag signals "identify a condition of use of words associated with that sense signal in the generation of the expanded search request". Ginsberg does not have any element that corresponds to this element, nor does Ginsberg teach or suggest this element.

The Applicant has added claim 21-24. Claims 21-22 depend from claim 1 and are directed to a "NOT operator in association with a related term" and the weighting of related terms. Claims 23-24 depend from claim 15 and are directed to formatting a boolean search request and a merger module for processing the various search results received from the search engines. As none of these elements are found, taught or suggested by the Ginsberg reference, the Applicant asserts that these claims are allowable.

The Applicant contends that the claims are now in allowable form and respectfully requests entry of these amendments and allowance of these claims.

Respectfully submitted,


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Enclosures

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